

Message from Director

I hope everyone is having an outstanding holiday season! As with most aspects of our lives during this pandemic era, we have adjusted how we celebrate the holidays to keep our 'ohana and ourselves healthy. The plethora of ways you all have exceeded this challenge is personified in our [holiday lights tree](#) pictured above. The roughly 9' tall tree is covered with thousands of braided ti leaves, wrapped in over 46' of delicately-crafted, fresh flower haku lei, all in front of a background draped with 26,000 paper plumeria stranded into 110 enormous lei measuring 20' each. These numbers are spectacular, but most astonishing is how our diverse and talented team was able to work together, in a COVID-restricted environment, to create this display from scratch. It is this collaborative spirit, ingenuity, and dedication to detail that are some of the most impressive qualities you all possess. Thank you for adding quality to the lives of our communities, especially during the pandemic, and I know we truly make a positive difference in their lives. I wanted to wish you & your family a happy holiday season & hope you enjoy it. Please take care & be safe! ~ Michele

MO'OLELO PĀKA (PARK STORY)

Quarterly Newsletter from the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation

October through December 2020

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Mahalo to our employees & manager of the year!



Jeanine Nichols



Peter Yamashita



Joshlyn Sand

Reopening Hanauma Bay!

On Dec. 2, after being closed for over 8 months, [one of our most iconic natural treasures reopened to the public](#) under pilot program guidelines: closed Monday & Tuesdays, entry from 7:4am to 2 pm, 720 person daily limit, increased fees for nonresidents, with a ban on commercial activity.



Reimagined Arbor Day

Though gathering sizes were limited, our Division of Urban Forestry and Botanical Garden staff partnered with community groups to plant and give away [hundreds of trees for Hawai'i's Arbor Day](#); maintaining the spirit & impact of expanding our urban forest to benefit our island's future in a green way.



Kea'au Enforcement & Cleanup

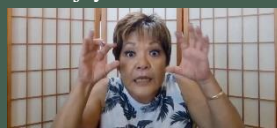
For the second year in a row, [DPR led a large-scale enforcement & cleanup effort for a half-mile stretch of the Leeward Coast](#). This multi-City agency project resulted in over 52 tons of trash being removed, a revitalization of the area, and 20 homeless individuals accepting services to help improve their lives.



WORKING HARD DURING THE PANDEMIC

Virtual Talk Story Festival

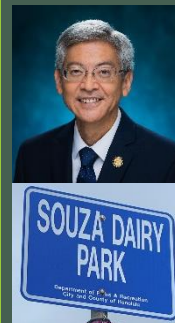
Hawai'i's oldest & largest storytelling celebration took on a unique theme this year of "Talk Story Festival at Home," with the event going entirely virtual. All of our 5 storytellers shared their colorful tales through digital videos that you can still enjoy from the comfort of your home by



visiting our [DPR YouTube page](#)
[bit.ly/DPRyoutube](#)
← [Kathy Collins](#)

Energy Saving Efforts Advance

A major initiative to make our parks more energy efficient and sustainable was announced with the [selection of NORESO as our Energy Saving Company](#). They are tasked with surveying our facilities and operations to see how our park amenities can be upgraded at no cost to taxpayers; by using future savings to fund the fixes.



Renaming Parks

The dedication of [Mānana Community Park to the late Senator Breene Harimoto](#), & the renaming of Kaluapuhi Neighborhood Park in Kāne'ohe to the [Souza Dairy Park](#) continues our tradition of remembering our island's history & those who shaped it through park recognition.



[bit.ly/DPRyoutube](#)



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Physically Distanced Holiday Celebrations

Providing recreational opportunities for our communities has been a creative puzzle for our park staff, and they have certainly helped to solve it! Kalihi staff made goodie bags for their keiki and put together some spooky digital stories, while the the Koko Head Complex held a virtual costume contest for Halloween. Our Christmas celebrations are helping to spread cheer across the island with activities from Makiki, Mānoa, Pacific Palisades, Booth, 'Aiea, and Hālawā Complexes



In an effort to keep our kupuna entertained & active during the pandemic, our Senior Citizens Section launched the “Kupuna in the Park” Series with the suspension of our Senior Clubs. Check out the fun on our [DPR YouTube Channel](#).



DPR COVID-19 Response Timeline:

Beginning with Mayor Caldwell's Emergency Proclamation on March 4, the City and DPR have issued and relaxed restrictions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Check out our [previous newsletters for the timeline from March to June & July to September](#).

Sept. 10 – Parks, botanical gardens, community gardens, & some facilities (i.e. bathrooms and parking) reopened for solo activities

Sept. 15 – First round of COVID-19 surveillance testing concludes, with over 60,000 tests conducted with a 0.6% positivity rate.

Sept. 19 – People's Open Markets resume regular schedule.

Sept. 22 – DPR’s tiered reopening strategy announced along with City-wide reopening strategy.

Sept. 24 – 5-person gatherings allowed at parks, beaches, and gardens. Koko Head Shooting Complex, outdoor play courts, pools, skateparks, dog parks, playgrounds, & exercise equipment reopened. Daily Park Canopy Permit system begins, requiring a simple online permit to put up a canopy in City parks.

Oct. 3 to Oct. 4 – Drive Through to Beat the Flu Event held at Kaka'ako Waterfront Park.

Oct. 9 – Campgrounds reopened with maximum of 5 people per permitted campsite.

Oct. 16 – DPR Reopening Strategy revised to allow permitted commercial activities to resume in parks under Tier 2.

Oct. 16 – Second round of COVID-19 surveillance testing begins at the Waikīkī Shell.

Dec. 2 – Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve reopened to the public under pilot program guidelines.

Kākou for Parks Program Updates:

We have continued this one-of-a-kind program to revitalize our most heavily used park facilities amidst the pandemic. Since 2015, this key Mayor's initiative has resulted in improvements to **176 different parks** across our island, including:



Kāneʻohe District Park



Kualoa Regional Park (Campsite A)



Ala Wai Neighborhood Park

120

New & Refurbished Play Apparatus

123

Renovated Comfort Stations

432

Resurfaced Play Courts